

In 1857 a group of ornithologists who had been meeting for some years resolved 'to establish a Magazine devoted entirely to Ornithology'. Thus the BOU was founded in 1858. In that year Philip Sclater, the first editor of *Ibis*, had a paper on 'The Geographical Distribution of Birds' published by the Linnean Society. On reading it Wallace wrote to Sclater who had been appointed the first editor of *Ibis*. The letter (*Ibis* 1: 449-454, 1859) mostly dealt with the separation of the Indian (Oriental) and Australian regions. He suggested the divide, known as the Wallace Line, be drawn through the 25 km-wide Makassar Strait between Bali and Lombok, between Celebes and Borneo, and between the Moluccas and the Philippines. As he stated 'Barbets reach Bali but not Lombok; *Cacatua* and *Tropidorhynchus* reach Lombok but not Bali. *Cacatua*, *Trichoglossus* and *Scythrops* in Celebes but not in Borneo.' His monumental work, which confirmed him as the father of zoogeography, *The geographical distribution of animals*, was published in 1875.

It was Sclater, the Club's first chairman, who met Wallace at Waterloo Station on his arrival from New Guinea on 1 April 1862. Wallace had brought with him two Lesser Birds-of-Paradise *Paradisaea minor* which, much to Sclater's surprise 'had actually reached London alive' (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 23: 3).

Wallace died on 7 November 1913. Obituaries in *Ibis* and the Bulletin were among the many tributes paid to him. Buried at Broadstone (Dorset), he is commemorated by a memorial plaque on the floor of Westminster Abbey. At the service of dedication the Dean of Westminster said 'as is so often observable in true greatness, there was in him an entire absence of that vanity and self-advertisement which are not infrequent with smaller minds—it is great men who work for the work's sake without regard to recognition and who achieve greatness in spite of themselves'.

In pursuit of his studies Wallace had travelled in excess of 20,000 miles. His publications comprised 22 books, 508 scientific papers, and 239 other articles and reviews. In the Malay archipelago alone he discovered over 1,000 animal species new to science. Some of these, including the spectacular Wallace's or Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise *Semioptera wallacii* and 11 other bird species, are named after him.

Wallace was widely honoured in his lifetime. He was elected an Honorary Member of the BOU in 1860, a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1893, and in 1908 was presented with the first Darwin-Wallace Medal on the 50th anniversary of the Linnean Society meeting of 1 July 1858. He also received Honorary Degrees from Dublin and Oxford universities and the Order of Merit in 1908.

After the talk, those present moved into the NHM bird collection, where Tom Gladwin illustrated points he had made by reference to specimens collected by and / or named after Wallace. Thereafter, Robert Prýs-Jones used a selection of specimens that Wallace collected in Sarawak between late 1854 and early 1856 to illustrate research, based on comparative analysis of Wallace's field notebooks and specimen labels, which he and Lord Cranbrook are undertaking into the development of Wallace's ornithological knowledge.

During the meeting the Club, recognising its great contribution to ornithology, resolved to send its greetings and congratulations to the BOU as it celebrated its 150th year.

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Derek Goodwin 1920-2008

Many BOC members will have been saddened to learn of the death of Derek Goodwin on 14 May, at the age of 88. Following army service in North Africa, Derek applied his life-long passion for birds by joining the 'Bird Room' staff in October 1946, and he worked his way up to Experimental Officer (1954) and latterly Principal Scientific Officer. He became a familiar face and friend to all who visited the bird collections.

Derek's writings and contributions to ornithology have already been covered in the national press, and other publications, but a few personal memories of this very remarkable and much-loved man are appropriate here. Derek wasn't a member of the BOC: Effie Warr suggests he didn't care for joining clubs, or attending meetings. He preferred to leave work on the dot and go home to his living birds, which he kept in a small upstairs room, with an observation hole cut into it.

I came to know Derek personally, as he was my mentor at RN College, Greenwich, in 1953, where I had to undertake a study of a non-naval subject, and I chose 'ornithological evolution and speciation'. This involved me travelling to the Bird Room, at South Kensington, where Derek took me in hand, and also introduced me to many distinguished visitors; I vividly recall the imposing figure of Col. Meinertzhagen. Derek subsequently proposed my membership to the BOU, and we kept in touch spasmodically over many years. He was a lovely man and a special friend to all who came to know him, both professionals and enthusiastic amateurs like me.

Michael Walters worked closely with him during the transfer of the collections to Tring: 'Derek Goodwin was probably one of the most underrated ornithologists of the 20th century, largely because he was so self-effacing that few who came into contact with him were aware of his full value. I worked closely with him from 1970 onwards during the packing and transportation of the bird collections from South Kensington to their new location at Tring. The first two years of my work in the Bird Room involved the packing of the collections, a process not without trauma to all of us. I recall that I once said to Derek, "do you ever dream that one day you'll come in and find that all this transportation is a dreadful nightmare and that everything is as it was before?"'. He agreed that such an event would be a revelation. During the early years after moving to Tring, he and I would arrive at 08.15 at Tring station (we were the only staff members to commute from

south London) and walk to the museum, rain, hail or shine. None of the other, then current, staff ever understood the camaraderie that developed between us during those years.'

Derek's knowledge of birds was incredible. He handled and came to have a detailed knowledge of practically every specimen in the collection, and had expertise in all groups of birds, not merely the three families—crows, pigeons and waxbills—on which he published monographs. The many papers he published give no indication of the breadth of his knowledge, much of which has perished with him. One function of the bird section was to identify feathers sent in by members of the public, and Derek was an expert in this field. On one occasion several staff spent a whole morning checking unsuccessfully everything they could think of. Finally, in despair, they asked Derek, who took one look at the feathers and said: "Have you tried undertail-coverts of Golden Eagle?". It proved to be correct.'

Derek was modest to a fault. Before retiring he destroyed most of his personal correspondence because it never occurred to him that it could possibly be of any interest. He handed over a few selected letters with 'great' ornithologists, never thinking that he might be held in equal regard. He attended his own leaving party with the greatest reluctance; it was, I think, an ordeal he would rather not have endured.'

Effie also recalls 'Derek transferred to Tring in 1971 but decided to continue travelling from his home in Herne Hill. He took part in the third Harold Hall expedition to Australia collecting birds for the museum but I suspect he didn't enjoy the collecting part very much. We went several times to his Herne Hill home where he cooked supper for us—always chicken and Malaga wine I remember. He worked at Tring until his retirement in 1982, and subsequently moved to Petts Wood.'

Derek's legacy to the ornithological community is an impressive list of scientific papers and books, and a wide circle of friends who will miss him greatly.

Michael Casement